CLAIMS:-

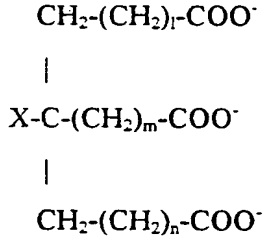
1. A non-proteinaceous compound isolatable from the urine of patients suffering from steroid responsive nephrotic syndrome, the compound having the following characterising features:

(i) a molecular weight less than 1 KDa;

(ii) binds specifically to heparin and heparan sulphate but not other glycosaminoglycans; and

(iii) inhibits LPS induced production of TNF-α and/or IL-1α.

2. A compound of the general formula:-



in which l,m and n may be the same or different and integers of 0 to 10; and

X is R-CO-O-, R-O-PO_2-O-, R-O-SO_2-O-, R-CO-NH-, R-CO-, R-O- or monosaccharide or oligosaccharide including amide substituted saccharides; in which R is a saturated, unsaturated, branched or cyclic carbon chain of up to 32 carbon atoms which optionally contains one or more hydroxyl groups, carbonyl groups, carboxylic acids groups, amino groups, phosphate groups or sulphate groups or combination thereof;

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts and derivatives therof.

3. A compound as claimed in claim 2 in which X is R-CO-O- in which R is CH_3 or $CH_3(CH_2)_f$ where f is an integer from 1 to 18, preferably 1 to 8.

4. A compound as claimed in claim 3 in which X is R-CO-O- in which R is selected from the group consisting of CH_3, CH_3CH_2 $CH_3(CH_2)_2$ $CH_3(CH_2)_4$ and $CH_3(CH_2)_6$.

5. A composition comprising the compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

6. A method of treating, preventing, or reducing the risk of Gram negative septic shock or another disease state involving elevated cytokine levels in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of the composition as claimed in claim 5.

7. A method of treating, preventing, or reducing the risk of viral infection in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of the composition as claimed in claim 5.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7 in which the virus is Herpes virus or HIV.

9. A method of treating, preventing, or reducing the risk of metastases or angiogenesis in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of the composition as claimed in claim 5.

10. The use of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 in medicine.

11. The use of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 in the preparation of a medicament for use in the treatment, prevention or reducing the risk of Gram negative septic shock or another disease state involving elevated cytokine levels.

12. The use of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 in the preparation of a medicament for use in the treatment, prevention or reducing the risk of viral infection.

13. The use of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 in the preparation of a medicament for use in the treatment, prevention or reducing the risk of of metastases or angiogenesis.